As the Publishers See It

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scent to any similar accomplishment."

It seems to us that the new writers are not only holding their own but are in many instances rivalling the popularity of "before the war" writers.

Little, Brown and Company.

THE most popular novel on our 1921 list was A. S. M. Hutchinson's "If Winter Comes." Published on August 12, it reached a sale of well over 200,000 copies by Christmas, and is now in its 365th thousand. It has also been a conspicuous success in England, where over 70,000 copies have been sold.

None of our non-fiction publications in 1921 was among the best sellers of the year.

In fiction, in addition to "If Winter Comes," we published during 1921 several very successful novels, notably, "The Wasted Generation" by Owen Johnson; "Martin Conisby's Vengeance," by Jeffery Farnol, and two novels by E. Phillips Oppenheim. Under the circumstances, the fact that the other best sellers of the year were issued by other publishers occasions us no regret. Of the books of non-fiction published by other houses during 1921, we should have liked best to publish Strachey's "Queen Victoria."

In our opinion the reading public has neglected William Dudley Pelley's novel, "The Fog," which, though it was the subject of many enthusiastic reviews during the autumn of 1921, had only a moderate sale. We are glad to say, however, that the book has shown considerable life during the last two months and it would appear that its merits are gradually becoming known to the more discriminating readers of fiction. THE NEW YORK HERALD said of this book: "Several thousand of the several hundred thousand who read 'Main Street' hated the book. If you belong to the 'Main Street' haters, incorporated, you are bound to enjoy 'The Fog.' It possesses inspirational qualities which 'Main Street' conspicuously lacked."

It is hard to say whether or not the new writer is holding his own with the writer whose reputation was established before the war. Column after column has been written in praise of the younger generation of novelists, but it would appear that the public is weary of the pessimism which is so noticeable in the work of many of these writers. After all, most of us think it's a pretty good world we live in, and this may account in large part for the tremendous popularity of Mr. Hutchinson's optimistic novel. Its wholesome philosophy—"If winter comes, can spring be far behind?"—is decidedly welcome to the many readers who have been depressed by the succession of "realistic" novels with "unhappy endings."

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The Macmillan Company.

OF the novels in our 1921 list "Mr. Waddington of Wyck," by May Sinclair, probably enjoyed the greatest popularity, though "The Tower of Oblivion," by Oliver Onions, "Beggars' Gold," by Ernest Poole and Sir Harry Johnston's "The Man Who Did the Right Thing" were all widely read.

Of the non-fiction the one volume edition of Wells's "The Outline of History" unquestionably was the most popular book, with Lord Bryce's "Modern Democracies" a good second.

Certainly there is on our list a book that the reading public seems to have neglected and which is of outstanding merit. It is Henderson Daingerfield Norman's "The Plays of Edmond Rostand." These books have been widely acclaimed by the critics, all of whom have said that Mrs. Norman had been unbelievably successful in her translation, and yet the sale so far has been deplorably small.

It certainly seems to us that the new writer is holding his own with the writer whose reputation was established before the war. Among our successful books at the moment we can point to Isabella Holt's "The Marriotts and the Powells," Edwin Meade Robinson's "Enter Jerry," Margaret Ashmun's first novel, "Topless Towers," Robert L. Duffus's "Roads Going South," Mary Briarly's "In His Own Image," Sylvia Chatfield Bates's "The Golden Answer," Colonel Thomson's "Terry." These are all new authors and they have without exception, I think, built up a fair public.

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Moffat, Yard and Company.

"THE SONG OF THE BLOOD FLOWER," by Johannes Linnankoski, enjoyed the greatest degree of popularity with us. It was the first book of this Finnish writer to be translated and made a great hit. It was often compared to Galsworthy's "Dark Flower," but some of the best critics found it greatly surpassed the work of the Englishman.

"Old Calabria," a travel book of Southern Italy, by Norman Douglas of "South Wind" fame, was our most popular non-fiction title, with Dr. Blanche Colton William's "Our Short Story Writers of To-day" running it a close second.

This, I know, will not be an original thought, but with my commercial eye looking out to sea what other novel could we have craved publishing more than "If Winter Comes"? And as to non-fiction, "Queen Victoria," by Strachey, stands to me in a class of biography that has made writing biography a new and splendid achievement.

"Three Crosses," by Federigo Tozzi, has been neglected in this country. Tozzi was proclaimed the greatest Italian writer of a decade; England welcomed him, as did France and all of Europe. This splendid first translation of his most popular and masterly novel has gone by here almost unnoticed. Two reviewers have praised it highly. The rest have not even noticed it.

William Stekel, the philosopher, is our most interesting discovery. In a year he has made a place for himself here with such titles as "The Beloved Ego," "The Disguises of Love" and "The Depths of the Soul"—philosophy, simply told and for the everyday man.

I am sure that the new writer is more than holding his own—and the young one too—i. e., Fitzgerald, Dos Passos, Weaver, Benet and Ben Hecht.

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G. P. Putnam's Sons.

1. ETHEL M. DELL'S "Obstacle Race" led our 1921 list in sales. In a rather different and more "highbrow" style Ben Hecht's "Erik Dorn" was the leader, and deservedly.

2. "Mirrors of Washington."

3. (a) "If Winter Comes." (b) Wells's "Outline."

4. "Privilege," a very excellent novel, by the young English author Michael Sadleir, while by no means "neglected," has not had the thoroughgoing success which its outstanding literary excellence deserves.

5. "Mirrors of Downing Street" might perhaps be called a "discovery." In its English form it came to us as rather an insignificant little book by an anonymous (and at that time unknown) author. The handsome American publication, selling at $2.50, has had a most gratifying and continuing success. The sales have nearly reached 50,000.

6. A difficult question to answer concretely, but as it is understood, our answer is unqualified "yes."

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Fleming H. Revell Company.

THANK you for giving us the opportunity to be represented in your discussion. Paragraph three we would rather not discuss, but here are the others:

1. "Prodigal Daughters," by Joseph Hocking, is a novel showing the greatest popularity on our 1921 list.

2. Roger W. Babson's "Making Good in Business" overshadows any other book on our 1921 list.

4. William George Jordan's "The Trusteeship of Life" received a bad deal from the printers and binders and its publication was so badly delayed that it arrived just before the Christmas holidays, too late to participate in the holiday sales and just in time to make it a last year's book. However, the essays are still remarkably good. We feel sure it will outgrow its bad beginning.

5. "Poisoning Democracy." George McCready Price makes the remarkable discovery that the evolutionary theories, viz., the "new" theologies, are responsible in a large degree for the present "Bolshevistic" conditions prevailing to-day. This is particularly interesting in view of the remarkable interest in the subject of evolution to-day.

6. It seems to us that this question ought to be asked in the reversed order. "Is the old writer holding his own with the new writer?" Probably every publisher has felt the trend of the conditions to-day upon new fiction writers. The old novelist has undoubtedly suffered by comparison with the works of some of the new writers who are reflecting the flippant spirit of the age.

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Charles Scribner's Sons.

WE are interested in your letter and its questionnaire of our experience with books of the last year and we feel sure that your presentation of the replies of various publishers to these will make a suggestive and enlightening page of your spring book number. In finding the answers to your queries we have had difficulty in some cases of singling out a book from many close competitors and we have no doubt that some of our decisions, carefully as we have thought them out, are open to discussion.

If we answer the last question before the first it will be because in our case they are closely related. In our opinion, you ask, is the new writer holding his own with the writer whose reputation was established before the war? We should not have been surprised if you had put the question the other way, asking if the elder were still maintaining his position. The new writer is so talked of, his work so welcomed, "the spirit of youth" so ascendant in the world in general, that many believe him to be crowding out the established men in letters as well. In answering this question we should not be too far influenced by such remarkable instances as F. Scott Fitzgerald. Such writers as Frank H. Spearman, Jackson Gregory, Meredith Nicholson, Francis Lynde, &c., whose reputations were established before the war, are decidedly "holding their own." Surely Galsworthy must be listed among the older writers and the demand for his novels has been so great that we have felt warranted in reprinting in a single volume the novels and stories which form "The Forsyte Saga."

And this brings us to the first question on your list, and our reply that John Galsworthy's "To Let," the last novel of "The Forsyte Saga," leads our 1921 list in popularity, is another proof of our answer to the last.

Non-fiction is nearly always led by biography. This year Mrs. Robinson's "My Brother Theodore Roosevelt" headed the list, but another book stood so high that we feel justified in mentioning it, especially as its success shows, we think, a trend, since the war, toward serious books and those treating of world questions. This is "The New World of Islam," by Lothrop Stoddard, whose "Rising Tide of Color" the year before met with similar success.

In asking "Is there, in your list, any book that the reading public seems to have unfairly neglected when its merits are considered?" we assume that you mean here not to confine us to the books of a single year. Of fiction, "The Children of the Desert," by Louis Dodge, a tragedy of the desert country of the Southwest, seems to us so powerful and dramatic in its story, so full of the color of that mysterious and tragic land, and so real in its characters that we cannot help feeling that the demand for it should have been greater. We believe, too, that if this book were published to-day, when the distractions of war time are absent, it would be more adequately appreciated. In non-fiction, a book which was largely praised by the reviewers and caused much discussion in the press has, curiously enough, had less success than the importance of its theme and its immediate nature would seem to justify. This is "Is America Safe for Democracy?" by William McDougall—a warning as to the state of our civilization by a great psychologist.

One associates a "discovery" in publishing with fiction. The expected answer to the question "Was there, in your 1921 list, any book that stands out in the light of a particularly interesting discovery?" would bring forth the name of a young novelist. But this year, in our case, the discovery is not a novelist, but a traveler. She is Winifred Hawkridge Dixon, a Boston girl who, a few years ago, crossed America and explored its Southwest in a motor, in which she wandered about up Indian trails and through Indian villages in an entirely unconventional manner and wrote of it in "Westward Hoboes." This is not a new thing to do—perhaps thousands of girls have crossed America in a motor; we doubt sincerely if any girl in America could have written so humorous and imaginative a book about it. Of all our travel books its character is unique.

Mrs. Dixon is not our only 1921 discovery. We found, too, a novelist for whom we think the future promises much, but we must not mention him, for his book will belong to 1922.

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Frederick A. Stokes Company.

WE have given careful consideration to your letter of April 3 and shall answer to the best of our ability the questions you ask.

1. The novel on our 1921 list that actually sold the greatest number of copies during that year was "Sisters-in-law," by Gertrude Atherton. "The Enchanted Canyon," by Honore Willsie, is rapidly catching up and is selling actively nearly one year after publication.

2. The non-fiction work actually selling the greatest number of copies in 1921 was "Violin Playing," by Leopold Auer. The non-fiction work having the greatest sale including 1922 to date, is "Auction Bridge Standards," by Wilbur C. Whitehead.

3. Outside of our own list, it seems to us that we should most like to have published, in fiction, "If Winter Comes," and in non-fiction, "Queen Victoria."

4. One novel on our 1921 list which we think deserved much better treatment at the hands of the public than it received was "Our Little Life," by J. G. Sime. Its merits were recognized by the best reviewers and it enjoyed a distinct success in England.

6. Question six offers so many lines of approach that it is practically impossible to answer it in a general way. In the matter of sales and popularity the new writer is making a good showing in certain kinds of books. In other respects the matter is debatable and the debate bids fair to last a long time.

"The Fire Bird," which Doubleday, Page & Co. will publish on April 28, is Mrs. Gene Stratton-Porter's first published poem. It is an American epic based on the ancient Indian legend of the fire bird and written in the rhythms of the forest, falling now and again into the wash of the waves or the winding music of the canyons. From her earliest childhood Mrs. Porter's imagination has been fired by tales of Indian traditions. She lived near the haunts of the Miamis and was often a guest in the wigwam of Chief Waccaconah, whose children were her dearest playmates. When she grew older Mrs. Porter pursued her studies of Indian literature aided by her husband, who was a collector of Indian relics and possessed a rare collection of pipes, skin dressing implements and stone axes. Several years ago while reading Frazer's "Folk Lore of the Bible" Mrs. Porter found the record of a flood narrative preserved among the Natchez Indians of the Mississippi in which the flaming, bright winged cardinal was the central figure. This gave her the first faint theme from which she evolved her Indian epic.

Problems of the Young

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training of their children. Like Mr. Holmes, Mrs. Scott insists that children should be reared in an atmosphere of idealism rather than taught ideals directly; that they will acquire naturally the finer habits of life if brought up in homes where the rights of all are respected, where courtesy and kindness are "the common rule," where "arbitrary commands and demands" are unknown, and where work has respect and appreciation. But if parents themselves set a bad example, they cannot expect their children to be exemplary, no matter what ideals may be preached; and, as proof of this, the author mentions a woman who was disgusted with her small daughter's habit of lying to her, and yet who repeatedly instructed that daughter to falsify to others. It is the old question of whether those who live in glass houses should throw stones; and the main difficulty appears to be in making parents realize how fragile may be the walls that surround them.

STANTON A. COBLENTZ.